

Petition: We ask that the administration of President Allan Rock, University of Ottawa, reinstate the weekly documentary film and discussion series that it cancelled on July 14, 2008, after the series had operated every academic year since September 2005.

See relevant documents posted here: <http://www.archive.org/details/UOfOPresidentAllanRocksDecisionOnOttawaCinemaPolitica-Summer2008>

1	Jessica Carpinone	University of Ottawa Alumnus and current student at the Ottawa- Carleton Institute of Biology	OCP provides a space in which students and community come together to discuss pertinent issues that are often overlooked and ignored in other mainstream avenues. Please don't take this away from us.	29-Jul-08
2	Alroy Fonseca	Policy Officer, National Defence	OCP has been a very effective way to both promote dialogue of important issues and of ensuring that the university is engaged with its surrounding community.	30-Jul-08
3	Graeme J. O'Farrell	Community member	The OCP not only disseminates important, controversial and often neglected information but encourages an active and open dialogue among the participants. This vortex of community-building is exactly the kind of initiative every major university in every major city needs to help bring people together for a better world lead by more informed and community-minded people. To displace such an initiative would be a savage blow to academic freedom, student freedom and the compassion of people like Denis Rancourt and his students towards an unjust educational structure.	30-Jul-08
4	Oli Cosgrove	Community member	I'm appalled at the constant harrassment that those of us who attend the Friday films receive from the University administration. It has arrested some of our members, has shut down elevator service, tried to make the auditorium inaccessible to us, has denied service for the deaf, and now that those attempts to shut us down haven't succeeded, it has killed the event itself. Far from an institution that promotes academic freedom, the University of Ottawa is acting like a brutal dictatorship that suppresses freedoms. It is a black mark on the university and on the community. I was encouraged by the appointment of Allan Rock as president because I thought, having been an activist himself when he was a student at U of O, he would re-institute the proper freedoms. I am disappointed -- perhaps his years serving in the establishment have rubbed off on him.	30-Jul-08
5	Sarah King	International Development and Globalization Student, OPIRG Board Member	This open arena for information and community sharing must continue and should be offered university space as it is essential to the university experience!	7-Aug-08
6	Jane Stinson	Community Member	My comment is that it's important to keep this event going. It provides a rare and important bridge between the university and members of the local Ottawa community.	7-Aug-08
7	Kathleen McHugh	Community Member	I am a professional translator and mother with an active interest in human rights and social justice. I took part in a number of Mr. Rancourt's Friday evening sessions and learned a great deal from them. I also came away inspired by the number of caring, intelligent and articulate young people who attended these sessions. Events such as this are essential if universities are to remain socially relevant. In particular, this series could also serve to repair the damage to the University of Ottawa's reputation as a place where the interests of the business community outweigh broader social goals.	7-Aug-08
8	Neil Lesage	community member, poet, cook by trade	Ottawa Cinema Politica is an oasis in a cultural wasteland. It makes the U of Ottawa one of the best universities in Canada; stopping it would be a monumental crime. and a loss to the school and the city.	7-Aug-08
9	Deborah L. Smith	Alumnus, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law, 2006; Lawyer, International Human Rights Advocate		7-Aug-08
10	Luke Gerald	University Student	Cease censorship of community education and discourse.	7-Aug-08
11	Wendy Foster	Student	The first thing that comes to mind after reading this letter [from Pamela Harrod] is how imbalanced this purported "solution" is; I think about the weight, scope and volumes of blood involved in the social issues that our movement effectively deals with regularly. Despite our diversity of methods everything that we do is in the interest of improving society. In contrast, this letter is shallow, deleterious and oversimplified. The only explanation that seems to make sense to me right now is that whoever is involved in the decision making process about allocating a room is either naive or misinformed. I would be pleased to explain to Ms. Harrod how cinema politica purports to save lives; I would be pleased to review all of the politica cinema content with the University decision makers if they would please reconsider. There is no question in my mind that the administration of Ottawa U is able to realize the value of the film series.	7-Aug-08

12	ASTRID LOZANO	Electronics Engineer	The Friday film and discussion series at the University of Ottawa must continue. It's a unique space to learn on global issues and exchange views with people from different backgrounds. These democratic spaces allows civilized discussions.	7-Aug-08
13	Pantea Jafari	LLB Candidate, 2nd year	I am beyond disappointed in the U of Ottawa administration for its decision to end the OCP, an environment that has been and increasingly become a haven of open debate and discussion on topics of interest to the entire Ottawa community. As a regular attendant of the documentary series, I have always looked forward to Friday nights, knowing I will be watching an intriguing documentary that my will get analytic juices flowing, followed by an open mined discussion of the issues raised in the documentary and how that effects our everyday lives. It has been an haven for free thinking and camaraderie unlike any experienced inside or outside a classroom. It is shameful to see my own university administration shut down such a gift to the community when it takes so little from them to enable it. Instead of trying to shut it down, they should be proud of this growing initiative and promote it as a symbol of an open-mined learning environment for students that all universities should aspire to. It should be advertised as a selling feature int icing	8-Aug-08
14	Taiva Alexandra Tegler	Student in Education	I am appalled by the actions undertaken by the previous and current U of O president and secretary to ban Cinema Politica on the basis of their own irresponsible and abusive actions. Cinema Politica is a valuable event, which brings together community members and students alike in promotion of democracy through education and debate. It is vital for students and community members to have a setting in which it is possible to harmonize in pursuit of knowledge and understanding. It is abhorrent of a <i>University</i> – an institution intended to encourage all forms of education – to deny this right to members of the community, students and faculty. I hope that the new administration will not only abide by their duty to uphold these rights, but also apologize for their disruptive and abusive actions against Cinema Politica, community members, students and faculty.	8-Aug-08
15	Judith Drutz	honours student of economics	The University should not filter the type of information that can be shared and learned on campus.	8-Aug-08
16	Émilie Gravel	étudiante de psychologie, baccalauréat	Il est absolument absurde que l'université ne supporte pas une activité qui favorise l'ouverture d'esprit et la pensée critique de sa communauté, aurait-elle perdue son titre de machine à penser?	8-Aug-08
17	Corey Balsam	Community member	I strongly urge the University of Ottawa administration to reinstate the Friday Film and Discussion group. These weekly events have added immensely to my educational experience in Ottawa, and have provided many, including myself, with a chance to discuss critical global issues in an open and stimulating environment. Cancelling the weekly discussion groups is moreover an affront to all who value education and the pursuit for a better and more just world.	8-Aug-08
18	Ronda J. Brook	LL.B. (University of Ottawa, 1990)	Cinema Politica is a very inspiring and thought-provoking film and discussion series which allows the University of Ottawa to make a worthy contribution to the community it serves. I am planning to learn a lot from this year's films (as I have done in the past), and hope that the University will also be offering sign-language interpretation services for the series	8-Aug-08
19	Anne Caza	Citizen	I do want the Friday flim series to be reinstated.	9-Aug-08
20	Mélika Fontaine	Customer Solutions Center, Royal Canadian Mint	This event has given me access to information that I do not hear about everyday on the news. Many if not all of the issues discussed on the Friday events need prompt attention and I find it unfair that such an event will no longer be availbale because of a now more and more corrupt institution that is supposed to be open minded	9-Aug-08
21	Robert Alvo	member of the Ottawa community	I am signing the petition to reinstate Ottawa Cinema Politica at the University of Ottawa. I have found it to be a very useful and unique public forum.	10-Aug-08
22	Martha Ruben	MD, PhD, Biomedical writer/editor/translator, community member	I was looking forward to the new season, and I cannot understand how a university can close its doors to this kind of activities... Even with my different background abroad, which also implies lots of exposition to different ideas and movements, I LEARNED a lot in these Friday sessions... and feel really disappointed by this decision, and deprived of valuable experiences...	11-Aug-08

23 John T. Jensen	Associate Professor, Department of Linguistics, University of Ottawa	This series is a valuable service to the community and an expression of academic freedom and freedom of expression.	15-Aug-08
24 Margaret Stong Jensen	Community Member	The series makes an invaluable contribution to education at the university, and to the development and encouragement of the values that we need to participate as active citizens in building a better society in Canada.	16-Aug-08
25 Carl Karamaoun	student	I disagree with Mr. Allan Rock's decision to shut down OCP at the University of Ottawa. I support any solutions in which OCP can continue its weekly film and discussion as an educative, open, and completely harmless forum.	17-Aug-08